

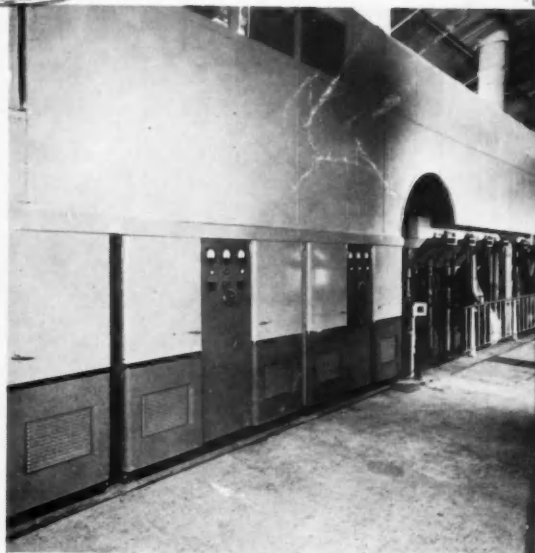
# Design



*Review of Current  
Design p. 28*

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You'll find we're your men—  
We do know our geu  
And our scope is extremely elastic.*

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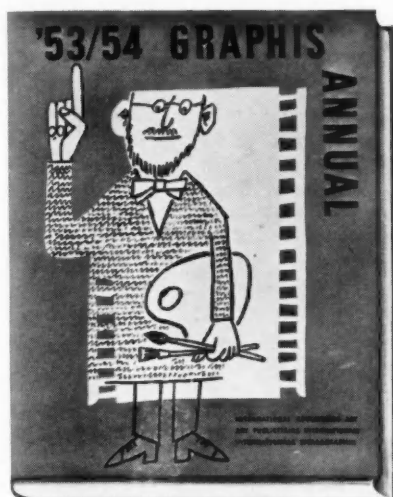
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DESIGN September 1952

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NUMBER 58  
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## DESIGN for November

Design policy for domestic equipment

Designers on the Record

Trends in television cabinets

Review of Current Design

# Design

## Contemporary pitfalls

*"There are signs that the growing popularity of the new furniture tempts imitators . . . to produce what cannot be called anything better than abortions. . . . It is only a properly trained designer . . . who will be able to produce well-designed furniture."*

THE CABINET MAKER

*"There are too many copyists of the work of the first post-war exponents of the contemporary movement and too few manufacturers – even including those of considerable size – trouble to consult qualified industrial designers before embarking on an entirely new field."*

THE FURNITURE RECORD

*"Contemporary furniture is gaining so much public attention that false prophets are appearing like sheep dressed in the borrowed clothing of fashionable idiom but with the wolf of misunderstanding underneath. This may be a good sign in a way, because it means that even the misguided realise that 'there must be something in this modern stuff'. But it also means that there are shoddy imitations about, completely at odds with everything that the best designers are trying to do, and likely to mislead the uninitiated."*

HOUSE & GARDEN

WE PRINT THESE EXTRACTS from recent editorials in the trade and magazine press because the points that are common to all three cannot be made too often. Reproduction contemporary furniture (or in deference to the campaign by THE FURNISHING WORLD should we say repro-'New Elizabethan?') is already rearing its ugly legs with the same abandon and indifference to authenticity as is shown by the makers of repro-'Jaco', to whom a bulbous limb and an antique rub are often the sum total of furniture scholarship.

We, too, have warned against these malpractices in many editorials over the past few years. The furniture industry will not solve these problems until its design policy is thought out afresh, until the designer is accepted as a creative and conscientious artist and not as a back-room hack at the beck and call of the sales manager. For his part, too, the designer must show proof of a sound technical training, a thorough knowledge of the problems of industrial production and a keen understanding of market requirements. Unless he can play his part in the business team and win the confidence of his directors, he is likely to remain either a disillusioned draughtsman inside the industry or a frustrated free-lance outside.

# POINTS and POINTERS

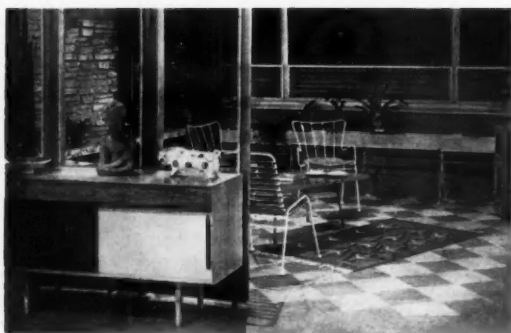
## Design for a TV Diary

If our readers are also viewers, Joan Gilbert's programmes for interviewing personalities will be familiar events. For the current series, 'Joan Gilbert's Diary', she has struck a new note.



Miss Gilbert 'at home' on television.

Her penthouse and balcony set has been furnished with modern designs which she selected from photographs in 'Design Review' at the London headquarters of the CoID. This is not the first time that a television set has had modern furniture, but for Miss Gilbert's programme it marks a new departure which she was quick to point out when the series opened in September. The furnishings are on loan from manufacturers and will be used fortnightly in the set which has been designed for the programme by Richard Levin.



Another view of the set designed by Richard Levin.

## Design critic's function

The design critic frequently comes in for censure on the score that he expects manufacturers to maintain standards which are in advance of public taste. This

point was made again recently by the Mayor of Kidderminster, Councillor Tatton Brinton, who was opening an exhibition of 96 carpets and designs shown by 11 Kidderminster firms. "Those who criticise us", he said, "for not being sufficiently go-ahead for their liking are a little unfair. We do our best to initiate new ranges of designs and to make carpets from them, but if they fail the loss is considerable". He went on to say that the manufacturer who outruns public taste is "sticking his neck out" and that the function of the design critic should be to "create a demand for new styles and new types of design". This is very true, and admirably put, but public taste cannot be created in a vacuum. To urge manufacturers to *make* more 'good' and less 'bad' is just as necessary as to persuade the public to *buy* more 'good' and less 'bad'. It is of little use illustrating an example of a well-designed product if that product is not available in the shops.

**good design**

The idea of distinguishing good design with a label is finding favour in several countries. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, issues one for goods selected for its exhibitions in the Merchandise Mart, Chicago. In *DESIGN* for August we described a similar 'design award' made by the Canadian National Industrial Design Committee. Now we find that Australia has a good design stamp for 'home grown' products. Once a month the Society of Interior Designers, from its headquarters in Sydney, presents its Good Design award, shown above, to a new product. The manufacturers can then use it for advertising and press publicity.

## The end of an era

Another rule of thumb goes west. Refrigerators don't have to be white any more. According to a full-page advertisement in an American glossy they may now be fitted with loose covers "to match your kitchen. Takes only 7 minutes and 1½ yards of fabric". Seven minutes to fit or to make? No matter. It was bound to come. Only a dyed-in-the-wool member of the DIA would protest that white alone is functional and fit for an ice box. But where do we stop? Loose covers for 'fridges - knitted cosies for cisterns? zip-suits for washing machines? plastic pants for tallboys?



## COLOUR and DESIGN to sell plant and product

IT IS OFTEN A LONG JOURNEY from the inventors' club to the industrial designer's studio. Most inventions mature slowly from the raw bones of an idea to current refinements of line, form and colour. This is particularly true in the world of machines and engineering where mechanics and functional achievement rate higher than finish and outward appearance. It is also often true that the greater the capital investment in the working parts the smaller is the attention given to details of presentation and sales appeal.

It was therefore, with particular interest, that *DESIGN* witnessed the recent unveiling at Marks Tey, Essex, of the BARTREV plant of the Vere Engineering Co. There was no mistaking the capital

ABOVE: The BARTREV factory at Marks Tey, as approached from the London road, with the new gatehouse in front, part of the existing factory behind, and the new canteen on the right. Gatehouse fascia is white, the rendered exterior dove blue STONITE and the venetian blind, by Venetian Vogue Ltd, yellow with blue tapes. The title to the factory, seen on the gatehouse wall facing the road, is in Bodoni lettering, and this type is being used together with Gill for the newly designed letter heading of the company. The plant is an excellent illustration of how a design policy has been carried through from the broad aspect of factory planning to the smallest details of invoices, contract forms, etc.

RIGHT: The BARTREV factory before it was converted.



investment involved in this revolutionary process, either from the point of view of the company which has spent some fourteen years perfecting it or from the point of view of the customers who will have to find nearly £200,000 each to exploit it commercially. And yet few plants can have been so thoroughly designed in all their details from the moment of their public presentation. Moreover, at first thought the BARTREV process would not seem to be an outstanding candidate for the services of an industrial designer, nor, in view of its very low labour costs, would considerations of industrial psychology, such as colour, light and operators' amenities, seem to claim great priority. The fact that these visual and psychological aspects of engineering design were given such attention stems from the company's belief in design being an essential component of good business management. One illustration of this was the publicity material, produced for the opening of the Marks Tey plant, which showed a consistently high standard (DESIGN August page 39).

The BARTREV process is, in brief, the first successful method of producing, in continuous length, rigid structural board for a multitude of building and cabinet-making purposes from raw materials that would otherwise go to waste. The digestion of a BARTREV machine seems infinitely adaptable; it can make stable board from almost any waste fibres that are available, though for obvious reasons its inventors have concentrated on those that are commonly found in quantity in lumber producing or processing markets — chips, cuttings, tops and branches which make up about 60 per cent of every tree that is felled.

The fully automatic nature of the process, from the grinding, sifting and mixing of the raw materials (a small percentage of a quick curing resin is added) through the loading of a hopper and its controlled discharge on to a moving belt to the radio pre-heating, the curing and bonding under heat and pressure in a

continuous press, and the final cross-cutting of the fast moving finished board, demands the minimum of manual labour and supervision. The result is a board to compete in the building and allied trades at a price substantially below equivalent boards made on multi-daylight platen presses.

The Vere Engineering Co is not, however, primarily concerned with selling BARTREV board. The company's main business is to sell BARTREV presses all over the world wherever a shortage of building board coincides with a surplus of wood waste, and that means in almost any expanding community.

The plant recently opened at Marks Tey — a full-scale production model, not a pilot — is to demonstrate the process to potential customers, most of whom will come from overseas. It is the main plank in the company's sales platform. It had to be presented as a complete working unit. Its setting in the Essex countryside, its architecture, its lettering, its interior layout, the colouring of the various units in the process, the main lines and form of the press, the service and canteen areas and the finished product itself all had to be presented as good examples of current practice in their individual fields. The design policy of the company dictated not only that potential customers should be impressed by the actual machine but that they should, through its setting and presentation, be able to visualise it set up in their own localities, and, through the exhibition of furniture and fittings made of BARTREV board, see at a glance some practical outlets for this modern material.

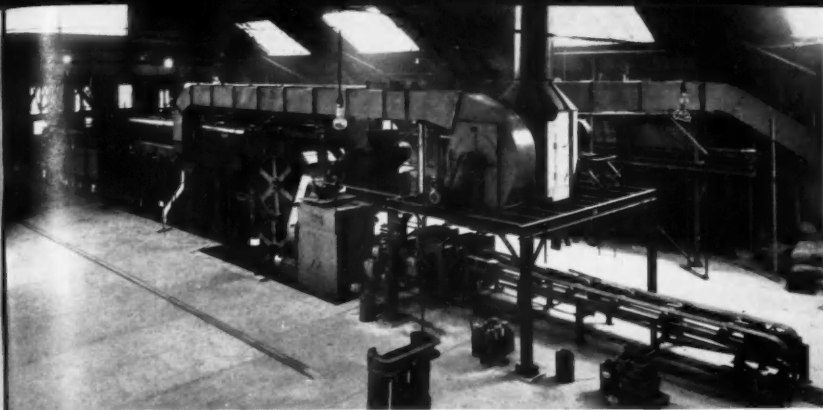
All these considerations pointed to the employment of an industrial designer, or rather a team of designers, to oversee each aspect of the campaign from press handouts to prototype products. A firm of design consultants, Gaby Schreiber and Associates, was therefore commissioned from the outset to carry this programme through. We show on these pages by photograph and caption how Mrs Schreiber and her team succeeded.



## THE DESIGNER *Gaby Schreiber*

*Mrs Schreiber has had considerable experience in designing colour schemes for industrial projects and her technical knowledge has enabled her to advise on many applications of BARTREV board to industry. Educated on the Continent she later studied economics, industrial methods and interior design. Her career began as a studio assistant and architectural*

*draughtswoman, but since setting up her own studio her design activities have included — apart from interior decoration — light fittings, pottery, glass, plastics, textiles, furniture and packaging. Except where otherwise mentioned all the designs for the BARTREV factory and offices are by Gaby Schreiber and her chief assistants, Ron Thompson and Felix Holton.*

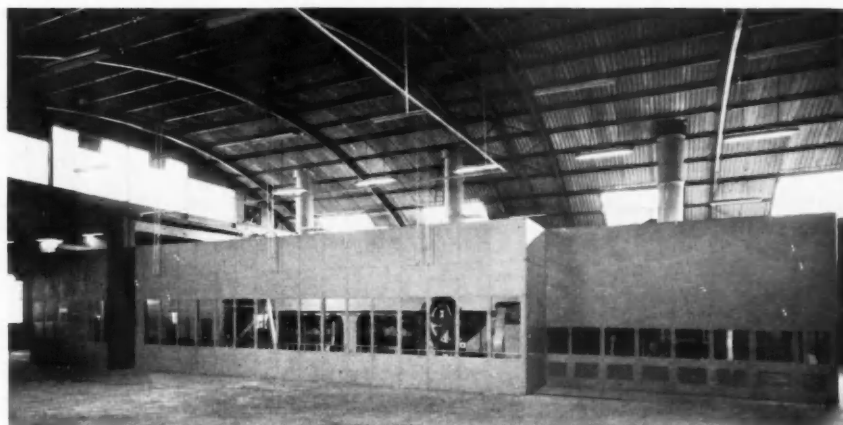
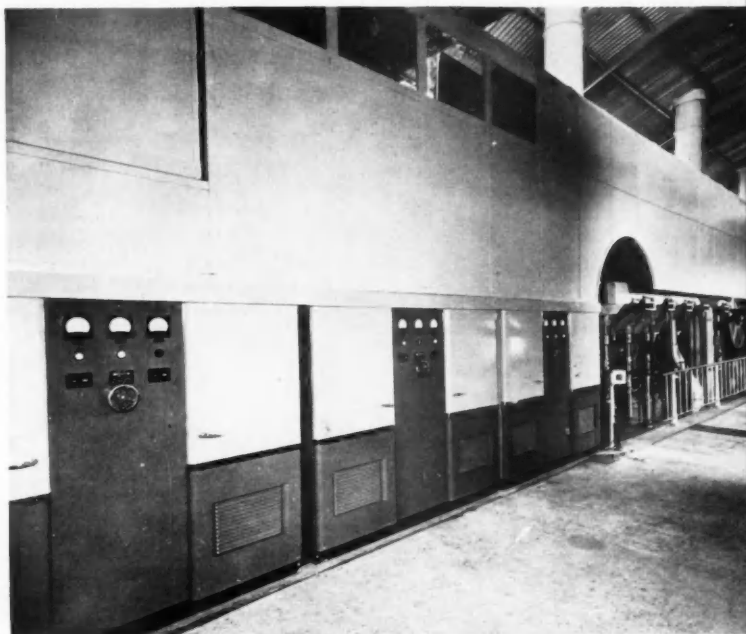


## THE PRESS

ABOVE: THE BARTREV press before the specially designed steel hood enclosed it. This machine produces chip board by a continuous process in varying thicknesses, and of a standard four-foot width. The board may be left unfaced, paper surfaced, veneered, paint sprayed or distempered; it is fire-resistant, sterile and vermin free. The machine took a team of scientists, engineers and chemists 14 years to perfect.

RIGHT: The internal hood, of prefabricated, partly formed steel sheets, protects the press from dust and enables ventilation and temperature to be controlled. It was designed also to improve the appearance of the press and is painted a light greenish-grey. The high frequency dial panels and ventilation louvres on the doors make their own patterns. Removable panels and glass windows allow for the supervision of lining paper loading operations.

BELOW: The outer steel screen, also greyish-green, gives greater protection and allows for additional ventilation control. The grey hoods and screening, and yellow railings cover up the intricacies of the mechanism and give the illusion of uncomplicated machinery. Stroboscopic fluorescent lighting by Courtney Pope Ltd is used.

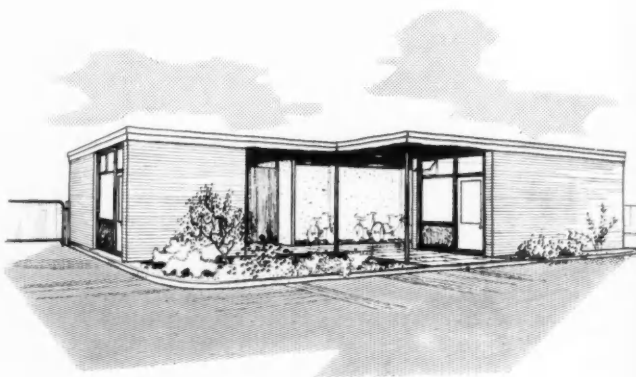


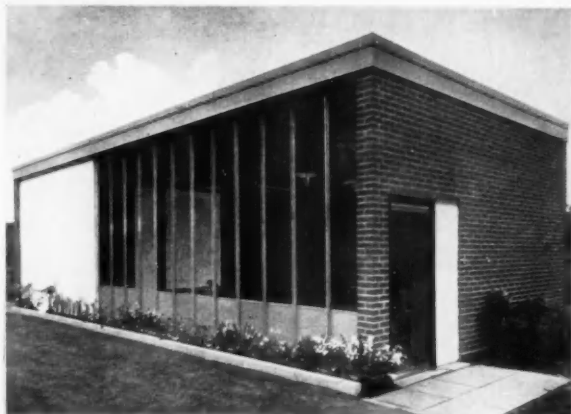


ABOVE: Part of the BARTREV press. The designers have made good use of British Standards identification colours—red for fire apparatus, orange for electricity and yellow for gas. Where solid patches of colour would have been undesirable the tubes or casings have been given easily recognisable colour bands. Grey recurs in varying strengths, but never becomes monotonous as it is always relieved by the lemon yellow of all framing, guard rails and structural supports, and the deep blue of raw material containers and storage bins. The ducts leading from the chip store to the press itself are painted greenish-grey to match the existing colour of machine bodywork.

## GATEHOUSE and CANTEEN

RIGHT: Back of gatehouse block, showing under-cover parking area for bicycles with dark blue BARTREV board ceiling and a colourful display of plants supplied by P. Wallace & Co. The time clerk's office at the right is combined with the weighbridge control. The gate police office at the left has achieved to a remarkable degree the quality of a room that is lived in by a human being (as indeed it is—for 12 hours at a time) as opposed to the impersonal look of the area generally allotted to a factory traffic controller. It has yellow and white walls, black linoleum on the floor, a Danish desk and a cord seat chair. A special wall unit includes a coat cupboard, storage space and electric hot-plate.





LEFT: The new canteen building, in colour, complements the gatehouse. Fascia is dove blue and the panel at the far end of the window is white STONITE. Vertical glazing bars are of aluminium. The ARMOURPLATE door has an ebonised wood surround and ebony handle with inlaid aluminium strip.

RIGHT: BARTREV board is used extensively in the interiors of the canteen, which caters for 36 people at a time. The tree mural, by S. R. Badmin, is black on a white panel set against an Empire green wall. The Scandinavian chairs, designed by Hans Wegner, have textured fabric seat pads, designed by Tibor Reich for Tibor Ltd, in a black and white pattern with touches of yellow and tinsel green thread. The beech tables were specially designed and have BARTREV board tops surfaced with grey FORMICA. The satin chrome finished lights by Frederick Thomas & Co are suspended on black stove-enamelled rods, the wide reflectors being painted lemon yellow, while the interiors of the perforated diffusers are pale pink. Over the self-service counter (not yet constructed) which will combine marble and BARTREV board, there is a slung lighting panel painted pale blue, with a cut-out of opaque glass to reflect light down on to the counter. BARTREV board, unfaced, is used on the ceiling, and veneered on the walls; flooring is of black and white marble chippings by Art Pavements Ltd.



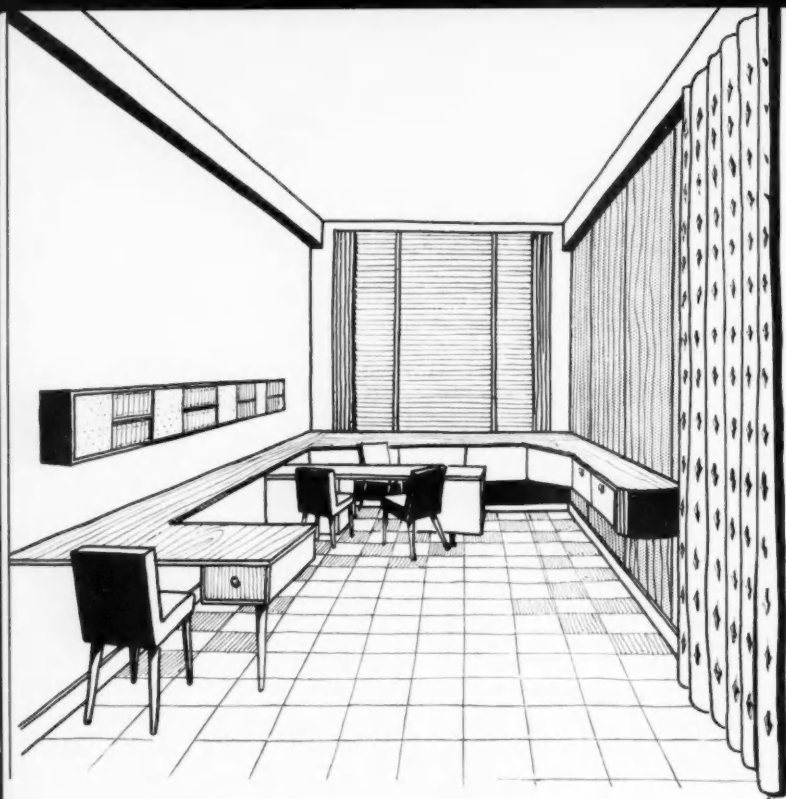
LEFT: The kitchen is fitted with storage units made up from BARTREV board painted white for shelving, doors and drawers, and with working surfaces covered with grey FORMICA. End wall is veneered in French fruit cherry, ceiling boards are painted pink. Handles are recessed cups of black plastic, floor is red tiling by Carter and Co (London) Ltd. The sink is by the Stainless Steel Sink Co Ltd.



LEFT: Canteen view of the kitchen servery hatch. One sliding panel is painted yellow, the other white. Interior of the fitment is BARTREV board painted white, exterior is veneered in West African cherry. Wall boards are veneered in French fruit cherry.

LEFT: Aluminium switch plate in kitchen controls the canteen lighting as well. Switches are black plastic on a satin chrome finished plate, with Gill lettering in red.





LEFT: Design for an office using BARTREV board on all surfaces, floors, counters, bookshelves, lighting troughs, panelling and desks. Variety in both colour and texture is achieved by the different surface finishes available.

BELOW: This unit, made of BARTREV board, can be used in the office or at home. A sun lamp is built in behind the painted louvres, and is raised to any desired height when the top lid is opened. There is a dressing-table mirror under the centre lid, and a removable divided tray for cosmetics or toilet accessories. The left hand top drawer is fixed and has a lid opening. There are 12 individual storage cupboards, large enough to take shoes. The round handles are of turned brass and slightly dished. The framework between cupboard fronts is faced with brass strips.

## SOME APPLICATIONS

BELOW: Model of the office block at Marks Tey, to be entirely constructed from pre-fabricated BARTREV boards and panels. The pressed skin exterior panels will be veneered and waterproofed, and those incorporating windows will contain radiant wall heating panels below. Interior panels (for walls, ceilings and floors) will be veneered, painted, or papered. The roof will be covered with white mineral-surfaced built-up roofing. BARTREV board will be used extensively for the furniture. The model was made by Cockade Ltd.



# Alfred Imhof Limited



A. Godfrey Imhof

## Jack Stafford

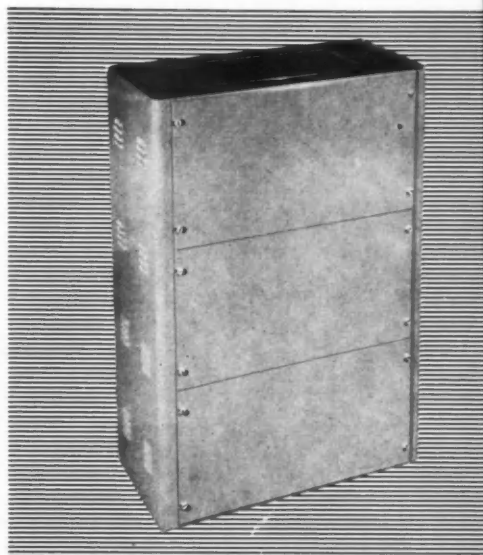
*Appearance design in the engineering industry has seldom been tackled with such consistency and thoroughness as by the design team of Alfred Imhof Ltd. Quality in design is the main platform on which the reputation and success of the firm have been based, and the examples illustrated with this article show how this has been carried out in both the manufacturing and retailing sides of the business.*

RETAILING AND MANUFACTURE – these have been the two main aspects of Imhof's business since the firm was founded in 1845 by the grandfather of the present managing director. From its premises in New Oxford Street, the firm sells radios, television sets and gramophone records of all makes, also thorn needles and a needle sharpener of its own manufacture. To a more specialised public, and to the trade, Imhof's sells a wide range of metal chassis, panels, cases and racks which it designs and makes. The production of metal cases to a customer's own specification is also catered for, but the firm prefers to take complete responsibility for the design, costing, production and delivery of cases for individual manufacturers.

## Approach to design

Imhof's is not a large organisation; it employs 90 people at New Oxford Street, and a total of 160 at factories in Thornton Heath and Bermondsey, and is of a size for one man to exercise complete, personal control. As the present managing director, A. Godfrey Imhof is more than normally forceful as an executive, and is also personally responsible for the design of a large proportion of the firm's products, any description of Imhof's the firm must take full account of Imhof the man. His personal belief in design has resulted in the sort of consistent design policy which often leads to commercial success in a highly competitive

*A typical Imhof design progression. Both these cases enclose three chassis for electrical equipment. The first, top, is one of the simplest cases marketed just after the war, using bent and welded steel. The second, right, is the latest development of this case, using pressed sides and top, and with cast recessed handles giving a relief from the purely surface qualities of the older case.*

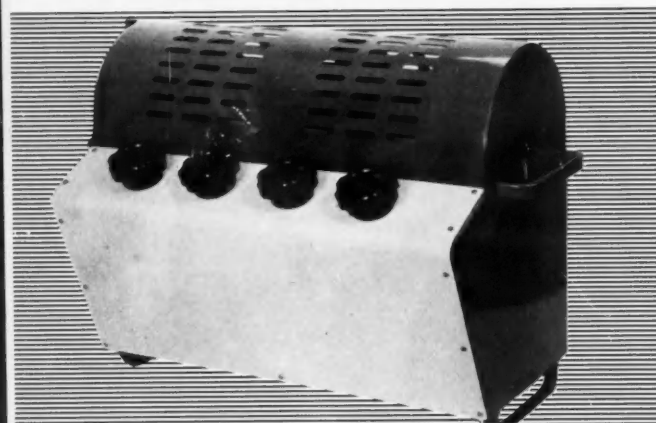




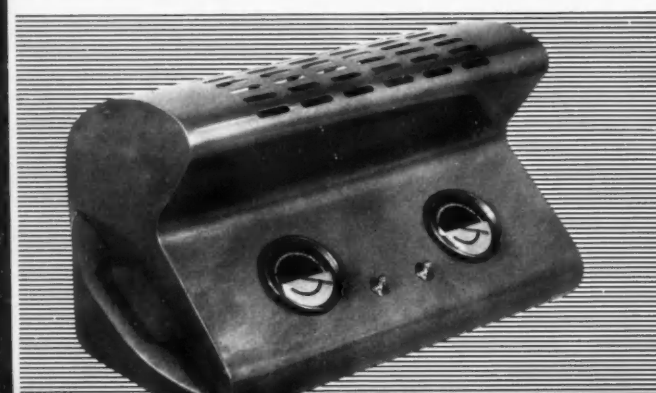
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4

field. There are many large and small sheet-metal working firms in this country, and in terms of production facilities there is no great difference between them and Imhof's. It is in the consistent application of a design policy, with a full understanding of all its implications, that Imhof's has made itself so different from all its competitors. The basis for this consistency of approach was probably formed just after the war, when the firm was expanding rapidly, and AGI (as the managing director is always known) was doing much of the design work himself. At the same time, as an executive he was immediately aware of what his design decisions meant in economic terms, and vice-versa. Thus his knowledge of the implications of a design policy has been gained at first hand, and his confidence has come the same way. He is now doing less and less designing – the fate of the designer-executive – and has been building up a design team, under the leadership of A. B. R. Dow who has been with the firm since 1947. AGI controls demands on the relatively small design staff by deciding which of the numerous inquiries shall be followed up; most of them turn out to be time wasters. He also tries to instil into his designers the commercial ideas which are necessary for the firm to make a living as a business, and once a designer has that commercial sense he is given the greatest possible freedom. AGI believes that this is a good thing in itself for any designer, but is especially important for the staff designer whose scope is inevitably more restricted.

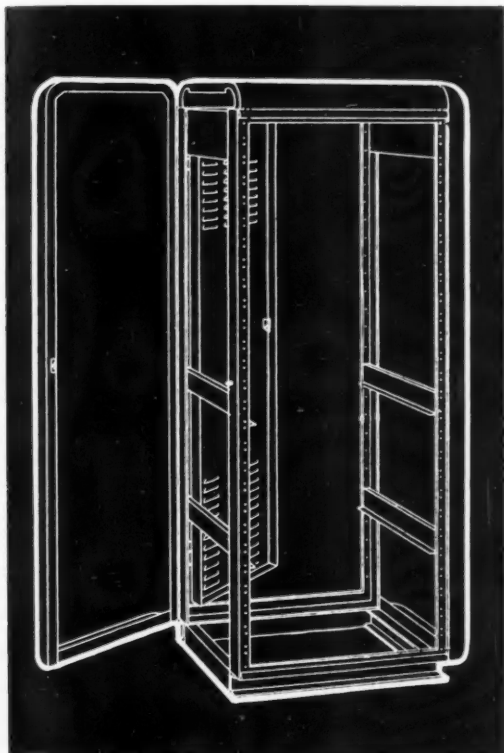
## Early designs

In 1845, as well as retailing musical instruments, the firm marketed an invention of the founder, Daniel Imhof, an engineer and a musician who was interested in mechanical methods of reproducing music. This device, the 'Orchestrion', was an outsize musical box with winding weights of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  cwt and tunes on 4-foot

**1:** One of the cases which has been in continuous demand since 1945. This type of case relies on proportion and quality of finish for its appeal. It is unmistakably a 'designed' object, but has the unobtrusiveness of a laboratory instrument.

**2:** A later version of the single chassis case. In the pressed top and bottom and cast sides, the work of the designer is more apparent; the case has become an interesting object in itself, although without any sacrifice of efficiency.

**3 and 4:** Two early specials designed just after the war to attract attention. Both are flashy, and novelty in appearance has been obtained largely at the expense of efficiency. The sense of scale which marks later Imhof designs, the balance between the main case and the accessories such as knobs and handles, is not yet fully developed.



wooden rolls which gave a playing time of 50 minutes and won a Gold Medal at the 1851 Exhibition.

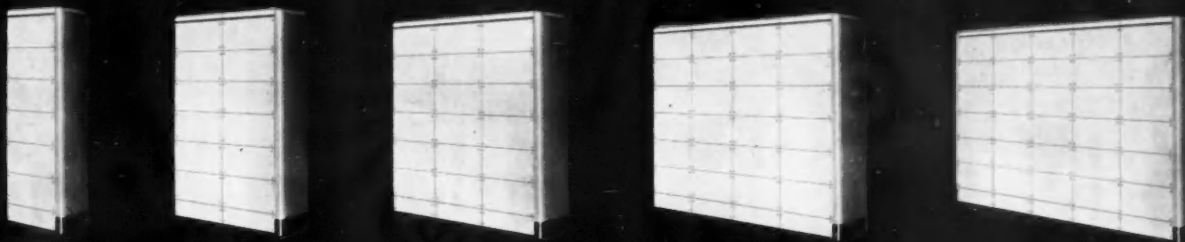
The 'Orchestron' was manufactured until 1911, and involved such considerable brass spinning that, when the new His Master's Voice gramophone was to be produced, Imhof's was one of the few firms capable of spinning the horns in one piece. From 1911 until 1936, there was no manufacture for direct sale, although individual cabinets were made up for domestic radio and gramophone equipment. In 1936 the firm started to manufacture thorn gramophone needles, and AGI commissioned the pack for these; his first definite contribution to the design side of Imhof's. This pack, the 'Top Hat', although it may look rather dated now is still one of the most distinctive needle packs on the market, and has probably accounted for the very large sales. But the difficulties of selling needles without a sharpener to accompany them, at a time when all the firm's competitors were offering both, forced Imhof's to try production of its own needle sharpener. Although various design consultants were tried, none of them managed to evolve a design which worked satisfactorily without infringing the basic patents already held, and which covered all types of rotary sharpener.

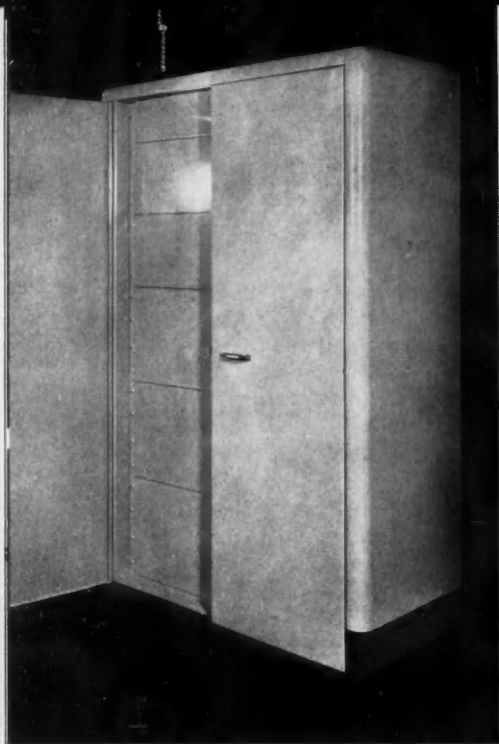
In the end AGI developed the sharpener which has been made and sold ever since, and which is a radical departure from all other types. The pack for this sharpener, also AGI's design, has risen in cost from 2½d before the war to 1s 7d now and has been largely discontinued; nevertheless three-quarters of a million

*Typical enclosed rack construction. Two main angle iron frames hold chassis, panels, top, bottom and sides, being drilled for any possible combination of equipments. These two frames are positioned by two large web section members. Ventilation is through the floor, air escaping through louvres in top and back.*

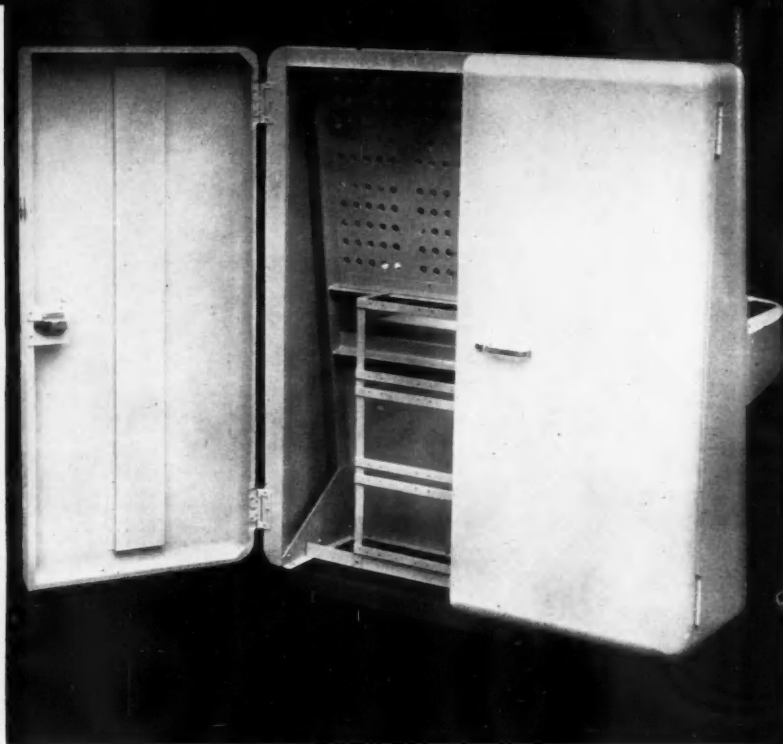
*This diagram shows one of the hinged side panels in the open position.*

*The range of 6-foot units. There are also modifications for control desks, mobile units, forced ventilation and locking doors.*





LEFT: A totally enclosed double rack, fitted with front doors.



RIGHT: This control cabinet shows a variation on the usual construction. The main frame is retained in front, but the sides are supported from it by brackets, and the internal equipment is carried on a small light frame mounted from the main one.

of them have been sold. It is probable that AGI's healthy suspicion of 'experts' was formed at that time, for although he frequently uses consultants for specialist purposes, he never hesitates to overrule them if they do not produce an answer which he considers satisfactory.

## Electrical equipment cabinets

During the war, Imhof's was occupied with radio and electrical contracts, being left at the end of the war with facilities for the manufacture of metal products in considerable quantity. It was decided to concentrate on sheet metal work, serving electrical manufacturers who wanted their equipment housed, and particularly those medium-quantity producers who wanted an individual style of case. A small range of basic items was put into production, such as chassis, racks and panels, and a few very simple cases of sheet steel with single plane bends and spot-welded construction. At this stage, the leeway for design was

small, being confined almost entirely to colour and detail, as the whole range was based on standard chassis dimensions, with variations in height and the combination of units. The cases were offered in a range of eight colours, most of which had never been applied to electrical instruments before. This ensured that the cases stood out in surroundings where black and grey 'crackle' had quite unnecessarily been the rule, and gave them an attraction for eyes war-starved of colour. To increase product differentiation, a range of handles was designed to be used on all cases, and these also were available in unusual colours. Two sizes of die-cast aluminium handle which were completely functional and also of considerable sculptural beauty were added to the more normal  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch round and flat section handles.

Several deliberately flashy, special cases were made up and exhibited to gain attention to the design service, and some of the standard range was shown in startling colours. As AGI says, "We found that at exhibitions if we had our stuff in lemon yellow and that sort of nonsense everybody liked it, but when they finally came to the point of ordering it, it was always back to shade 31 grey. If you just went in with the grey stuff it never raised an eyebrow and they never even talked to us." These cases served the purpose of attracting customers, perhaps not with a highly



ABOVE: An enclosed rack in use by Ardente Ltd. These racks take the standard chassis and panels in any combination of heights and have hinged sides to give easy access to equipment. There is a range of over twelve of these racks, in various heights, and taking up to five units side by side.

BELOW: Two standard control desks. These take a variety of fixed or sliding units of 19-inch panels. The tops are of metal or WARERITE, and the outer sides of pressed steel, although the inner sides are flat panels. The use of a long pressed strip at the edge of the table top emphasises its function, whilst the deep groove formed between the bottom of this strip and the top of the main side gives ventilation as well as visual interest.



developed design sense, but who were at least open to new ideas, and could be brought round to sounder design once their interest was aroused.

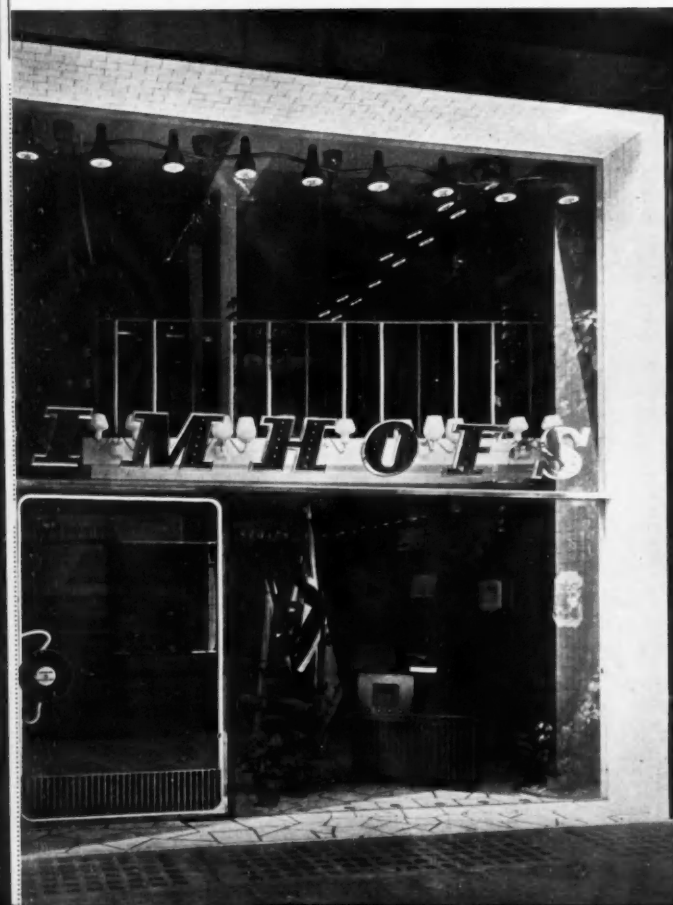
## Developing new models

The prototype department also developed an all-metal radiogram cabinet for the Radio Gramophone Development Co Ltd, in case of serious timber shortage for cabinets. Although it was never put into production, the usual problems of drumming in metal cases were so completely overcome that experts were unable to differentiate between metal and wood cabinets in acoustic tests.

A factor which may account for the general liveliness of the whole design staff, including AGI, is that the prototype department is in the New Oxford Street premises. In this section, the production methods are basically the same as those in the main factories, and during the development of all prototypes, the designer and the craftsman are in direct contact. Also in this section, the more difficult small batch production jobs are done, so that the best craftsmen tend to be employed in New Oxford Street, where their experience can best be used, and their ingenuity continually matched against that of the designers. Authority is readily obtainable for design changes which appear necessary as soon as actual metalwork starts, and skilled advice is available during all stages of design and development.

These advantages are fully realised when there is a rush development job to be done. An airbrush drawing of an imaginary refrigerator case in a press advertisement produced an inquiry about costs from a manufacturer wanting to compete in a new price range. Within four days of getting the necessary





*These illustrations show the entrance to the old and new showrooms at Imhof's premises in New Oxford Street. The new showroom was designed by Tayler & Green.*

information, a design was produced, and within a fortnight of this design being passed a prototype was under test in the manufacturer's tropical room. In the end Imhof's made 14,000 of these cases in 14 months.

## Standard range

To obtain stability of production, and also to be able to offer the lower price made possible by quantity production, Imhof's aim is to make the standard range inclusive enough to satisfy the main pattern of users' requirements. The standard range has grown accordingly, from about 20 items in 1945, to over 70 today and includes everything from plain sheet steel panels to complete control desks. Behind all this lie the standard dimensions for chassis and panels – the almost constant chassis width of  $17\frac{1}{4}$  inches giving a panel width of 19 inches, and the panel heights which are always a multiple of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Because of these dimensions, any possible combination of equipment can be housed with permutations of the various units, and a completely new range can be put up out of these older parts with the addition of few extras – pressed steel sides with angles of  $30/60^\circ$  instead of  $90^\circ$  made a great extension immediately possible without retooling.

As the standard range has grown in size, techniques of production have become more complex. The first units were of bent and welded steel, and soon after that came the use of pressed steel panels for the larger units. Now pressed panels are in use on several of the smaller portable cases and on the control desks, and the beginnings of a range with cast ends are on sale. All these changes have made possible a greater freedom of form, and even the older cabinets will be enlivened with cast recessed handles which contrast with the flat surfaces of the panels.

## Recent designs

The control desks, a relatively new addition to the standard range, and the most complex structurally, show a dual grasp of business and design sense. Previously, twelve different manufacturers had from one to twenty-five desks each from Imhof's, all basically the same, but with individual variations which kept their price at a high level. Some rough specifications were worked out which would include the essentials of each desk, but would enable them all to be made from standard components. The various

manufacturers were then sounded as to their demands, and were shown the saving in price which would become possible if they limited themselves to differing colour schemes and accessories. This initial piece of market research indicated definite interest, and the development work on these desks started. In the end, a range of basic units was produced, allowing a small but sufficient number of combinations to suit all the manufacturers, at an average saving of 50 per cent to each.

Market research at Imhof's consists of reports which the three salesmen make on all customers, and which are read by AGI. If they report inquiries for a particular type of case, then sufficient costing will be done to give them definite figures to offer prospective buyers, but often the initiative will be taken by Imhof's, as with the control desks, and an already contented manufacturer will be offered a price reduction based on standardisation. The continued development which this policy has established does much to disprove the theory that production based on sales requirements is necessarily conservative in taste.

## Expanding production

Imhof's has now reached a critical stage in its history; it has the demand and the ability to expand, and yet to do so will take it past the size where the managing director can still be completely in touch with every department. Although it is unusual for any firm to resist controlled expansion and stay in business, and although Imhof's would appear from all the outward signs to be expanding, it is a decisive move to make in a business where virtual one-man control has been so outstandingly successful. Besides the large premises in New Oxford Street, the factories at Thornton Heath and Bermondsey, the firm is building another factory at Uxbridge. This is being planned as a model factory, the architects being Tayler & Green who designed the present showrooms. It will be on a two-and-a-half-acre site and will eventually supersede the one at Thornton Heath. It is typical of the Imhof approach that probably more is being spent on design



*Two million of these 'Top Hat' packs for thorn needles have been sold since 1936.*

at this factory, proportionately, than has been spent on any other factory building in this country, and this apparently uneconomic approach will almost certainly yield handsome dividends, both in money and prestige.

The retailing business of the firm is affected by design policy in two main ways. The showrooms, which are not yet complete, will be examples of what AGI feels to be good interior design, both appropriate to the firm and consistent with its own house style. It is also a declared policy to give the best designs the benefit of the best displays, and to avoid design which is positively bad. AGI does not hesitate to try to influence manufacturers towards better design practice by making constructive suggestions, and by introducing designers to them who would fulfil their needs.

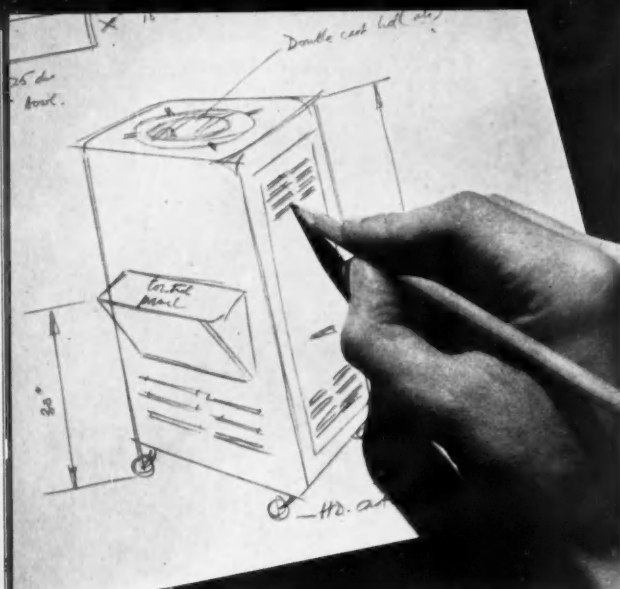
At present Imhof's annual turnover is about equally divided between retailing and manufacture, and its works facilities divided equally between the standard range, special batch production of its own designs, and special batch production to customers' designs. AGI's ambitions are to cut down the latter to make way for more staff-designed jobs – in his opinion only the unpleasant jobs are contracted out – and to make the firm better without it growing bigger.

## CASE HISTORY

### *A new design for a new instrument*

AN EXAMPLE OF THE SERVICE which is offered by Imhof's is the case for a heavy capacity centrifuge which the firm has developed. In early February, Baird & Tatlock (London) Ltd approached Imhof's, wishing to subcontract the design and manufacture of the case for an entirely new model, having inter-

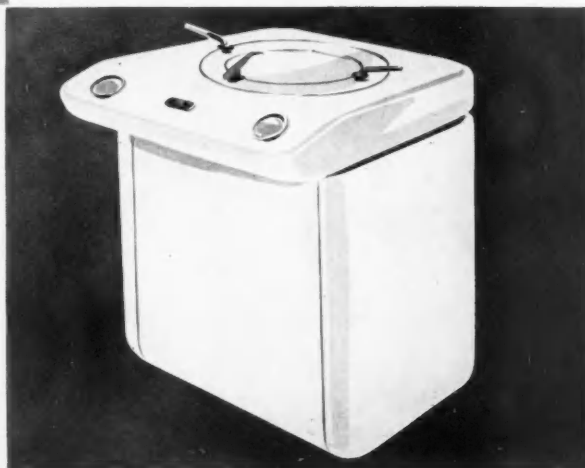
changeable heads and a total capacity of over two litres. Buckets, of up to half a litre capacity each, are mounted in the head which rotates at high speed so that the enormously increased gravitational force separates out materials of different densities. Although easy access to both head and buckets was required,



the rotating parts had to be completely enclosed when in use to protect the operator. As there were no previous models, no visual similarity with any other existing equipment was sought.

**1:** A rough sketch showing the original cabinet suggested by Baird & Tatlock. It was to be approximately 40 inches high, totally enclosed with removable back and side panels, and louvred for forced ventilation. For protection in the event of head failure, the bowl of the centrifuge was to be 10 gauge mild steel and it had to be 25 inches in diameter to accommodate the largest head. This bowl was to have a light alloy cast cover, capable of fairly quick release and complete removal for head changing, whilst an inner 19-inch diameter lid hinged to this would reduce weight for normal operational use. The control panel was mounted on the side.

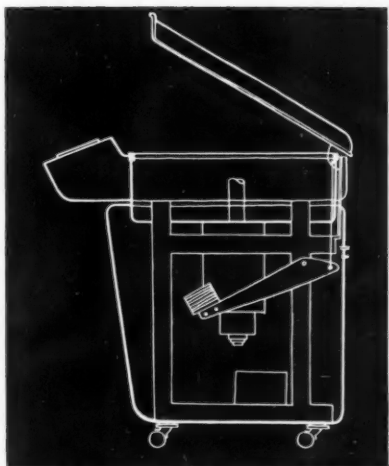
**2:** This design was developed and submitted by Imhof's from Baird & Tatlock's original suggestions. The control panel was moved up to the full height of the cabinet, but this made the distance from the centre of the head to the front edge about 18 inches — too great a distance to lean over when removing a heavy head. The various releases for the cast lids would be costly.



**3:** This further design was submitted, in which a single lid is used. For protection, the underside of this lid has to be of 10 gauge mild steel and the weight is about 30 pounds which means that a system of counter balances is needed. This gives an initial lift of about 5 pounds, with the counter balance weights taking over at about the half-open position, and holding the lid open at 70° to the horizontal. A pull of 5 pounds is required to close the lid from this position.

4: The final prototype which is shortly going into production. It differs again slightly, as a half-inch air exit is provided round three sides under a complete top unit, of which the control panel is part.

5: This diagram shows the counter weight, which is to be replaced by a spring, when the lid is in the half-open position. The bowl, with motor, and the brackets carrying the hinges for the lid are adjustable on the main frame to ensure a proper seal of the gasket against the lid. The main frame is of  $2 \times 2 \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch mild steel with panels of 16 gauge mild steel except for the lid which



has a 20 gauge top rubber mounted to the main 10 gauge panel. Complete access to the inside is through removable back and front panels.

6: The centrifuge with the lid open. A head carrying eight of the smaller buckets is shown. When the head is rotating, these buckets swing out into a horizontal position. The copper coils round the inside of the bowl are brought out to connections on the rear panel so that a cooling liquid may be circulated while the instrument is in use.



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# DUNN and



## Designer and retailer

*The growing popular taste for contemporary design in today's interiors and furnishings can be largely traced to the pioneer work of a few designers and retailers who, before the war, saw in the modern movement a way of escape from stale and overworked conventions. Geoffrey Dunn arrived on the scene when the movement was already gaining momentum, but the progress of his work since he entered the family business in 1932 has been rapid.*

## Douglas Newton

GEOFFREY DUNN, THE DESIGNER, and Dunn's of Bromley, the shop, each a famous name, are virtually interdependent. Consequently it is important to understand how the firm is constituted before going on to consider Dunn's work and its effect.

Since its inception as a cabinet-makers' about 1710, the firm has grown steadily, extending its activities as the occasion has arisen. Cabinet-making led, via the production of coffins, to undertaking, and some time later to furniture-dealing. As it stands, Dunn's is housed in three buildings. The shop in Market Square is a conversion by the architect Bertram Carter of what used to be a building with a gallery used for second-hand furniture; the main furniture shop next door was destroyed in 1941, but will be rebuilt, also to Carter's design, as soon as possible. A few streets away, a large nineteenth-century building houses a number of departments. They include removal and storage departments, upholstery and polishing shops, a carpet fitting department, a cabinet making and repairing workshop where furniture is made often to architects' designs or to drawings by Dunn's two resident designers.



*One of the display windows of the Dunn's of Bromley shop as it appears today. The shop was converted by Bertram Carter in 1946 from the earlier building (see below) which was damaged by bombs during the war.*



*The interior of the 1931 second-hand furniture department before Geoffrey Dunn joined the firm.*

RIGHT: General view of the exterior today. The concrete frame supports are white and walls are yellow, earth red and grey. RACE outdoor furniture is displayed.



The Ministry of Works hut which was used as a temporary building while the work of conversion was being carried out. Careful attention was paid to the lettering even during this short period.



BELOW: A Christmas display arranged by Geoffrey Dunn in the temporary hut. The tables were improvised from packing cases covered with sheets of asbestos.



BELOW: The interior of the newly converted shop in 1946 stocked largely with utility furniture.



The sale of contemporary furniture, therefore, is only a part of Dunn's activities, although it forms the major part of the firm's business. The furniture shop is not a passenger; it would probably be fair to say that it would not be there at all if it did not pay. Contemporary design has been a cause with Geoffrey Dunn, but as far as the firm is concerned it is a cause which has not been lost.

This is all the more remarkable since Geoffrey Dunn had to start from scratch in introducing his ideas to the firm. When he entered the business in 1932, at the age of 23, the half-timbered, Tudor-gabled shop, built in 1929, was stocked entirely with popular furniture of the period. It was then under the sway of his father and grandfather. But Geoffrey Dunn had just finished a couple of years as a furniture salesman in Birmingham. He never had any training as an art student, but in the public libraries he discovered through numbers of books and magazines the modern movement in architecture and furniture. This was about 1930-31, when the work of the Bauhaus had matured and Aalto was beginning to design the chairs which soon became a staple of modern furnishing. Even England was seeing a good deal of modern work through THE STUDIO and THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. Dunn's chief passion so far had been for the English eighteenth century; but now he became a convert to the modern movement, and, like most converts, a missionary.

Dunn began his campaign at Bromley with the unauthorized purchase of ten pounds' worth of Susie Cooper pottery. This speculation raised a small storm which was only allayed when his father discovered that, displayed in the most dashing contemporary manner on hessian-covered cubes, they sold well. Dunn was given, on a short lead, freedom to experiment a little, and a small window to fill. In this he had two important allies: L. W. Ruse, the firm's buyer, and



*The interior of the shop today. The most noticeable change is in the type of furniture and fittings on show which consist of many well-known contemporary makes.*

E. W. Owen, its secretary, now co-directors of the company, who both backed him.

At this stage, Dunn's opportunities were limited by several factors. He could not say of the trading tradition behind him, as a Heal's catalogue could in 1930, "For two or three years there has been much talk of 'Modern Furniture' . . . But at Heal's 'Modern Furniture' is not a new experiment; thirty years ago Heal & Sons were represented at the Paris Exhibition by an Exhibit which had more in common with the 'Modern Furniture' of today than with any commercial furniture then current." Dunn's had never been interested in design; and unlike Heal's or Gordon Russell, had not the prestige of the Arts and Crafts Movement behind it. Not only did Geoffrey Dunn have to start from scratch, his public had to as well. There was also the difficulty of obtaining a regular supply of modern furnishings. In principle he plumped boldly for the most advanced work of the time but a good deal of what Dunn had to show often consisted of less startling derivatives from the original designers working in the idiom. It is clear, however, that he chose very clear-headedly among the possibilities, and did not, like other and better known firms, propagate any false-modern designs.

As his freedom to purchase increased, Dunn used his position as a buyer to modify what he bought. Manufacturers, he found, had no real objection to eliminating a moulding here or substituting a handle there so long as they did not lose money by it. If they

were made aware that the design was thereby improved so much the better. Inadequate supply was largely the impetus behind the formation, in 1938, of the Good Furnishing Group, with which Dunn was largely concerned. This was an association of retailers including Dunn's, Gane's of Bristol, Rowntree's of Scarborough, Mummery and Harris of Frinton and others who needed more and better furniture than they could find. The manufacturing member of the Group was Gordon Russell Ltd. They planned a stock of designs commissioned and approved by themselves, manufactured within the group and distributed through their various concerns. The scheme got as far as an easy chair by Howard Keith and a dining room suite produced for the Group by Gordon Russell Ltd which were shown at the BIF in 1939. The war suppressed the Group, but it has now been re-formed. (See page 34.)

Although he is one of our leading modern designers, Geoffrey Dunn has never been a great originator, even in the context of Britain. His chief characteristics are not so much creativeness as an extraordinary degree of good taste and instinct for elegance. They are what drew him in the first place to the eighteenth century, and they assume in one form a love of craftsmanship which makes the use of metal for indoor furniture rather suspect to him. During the period before 1939 his work belonged to the school of those designers who would probably have agreed with Wells Coates, who wrote in 1932



*A display of contemporary furniture and accessories arranged by Geoffrey Dunn about 1932. The framed Empire Marketing Board poster, the Aalto stool and the Czech glass have a typical flavour of the modern idiom most popularly acceptable at the time.*



*LEFT: Bedroom furniture of 1935. Like many of Geoffrey Dunn's early designs, these were commissioned through Dunn's of Bromley, and executed in the firm's workshops. At this stage many of Dunn's designs were carried out in plywood. The stool is by Aalto.*



*ABOVE: Dunn's stand at the 1939 Ideal Home Exhibition. The dining room set was designed and produced by Gordon Russell Ltd for the Good Furnishing Group.*

that modern society was determined to be free, and that the home was no longer a permanent establishment. "Any house is supposed to contain a bath, a heating and lighting system, and so forth. The dwelling scene of tomorrow will contain as part of its structure nearly all that today is carried about for the purpose of furnishing one house after another."\* Taken to its conclusion this implied a maximum of built-in furniture, or rather architectural furniture: planned blocks which echoed the buildings' planned blocks of space. In his own practice, Dunn was again in key with the more advanced designers.

The theoretical virtues of such furnishing arrangements depend, however, on the existence of a certain kind of society. After 1939, when architectural furniture had a tendency to disappear overnight along with the architecture, the actual virtues of transportable furniture were re-established. It could be salvaged, and it was positively a good thing that it could be carried about from one house to another. Architects and furniture designers, though still sometimes found in the same person, have turned out to be separate identities after all.

On the whole, this is evidently a situation which suits Geoffrey Dunn better. His early interiors miss the dynamism with which Wells Coates endowed very similar forms, even allowing for a relaxation of Wells Coates' austerity in accordance with the demands of

*BELOW: This couch and lamp standard are two recent designs by Geoffrey Dunn. The woven cane backboard of the couch is separate from the seat and is hinged to a narrow cabinet which in turn is attached to the wall. By pulling the seat away from the wall the couch can be converted into a divan.*



\* THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW July 1932.



*Group of furniture designed 1951-52. Wing chair in collaboration with Maurice Russell and writing chair with E. L. Clinch. Screen bookcase was shown at the Institute of Contemporary Art's exhibition of experimental furniture in 1951.*

Dunn's client. On the other hand, the chest of drawers at the top of page 25 is a beautifully proportioned structure.

His post-war work is radically different. The screen-bookcase, above, is probably Dunn's most interesting recent piece. It demonstrates conversion of the Italian-American partition unit into his own terms, which are clearly nearer those of, say R. D. Russell and R. Y. Goodden with their British tradition than the cosmopolitan sympathies of, say, Eames or Chesa. In this, as in the radiogram, he has been able to indulge his affection for the sensuousness of wood. The post-war return to a more eclectic kind of simplicity is obviously sympathetic to him, and may very reasonably be expected to show excellent results.

The result of Geoffrey Dunn's combined work as retailer and designer has been very much what he hoped for some twenty years ago. For a large section of Bromley – the business remains largely a local, as well as national, concern – Dunn's is a shop one goes to quite naturally for one's furniture, no matter what class or age one may be. Dunn's example has made good contemporary design the inevitable best choice for a good many people, and that is a step towards the general acceptance of contemporary design for what it is: not an artistic freak but the vernacular of the period. It is an educative effort which, important in itself, could not have been made without the collaboration of both the elements which made it.

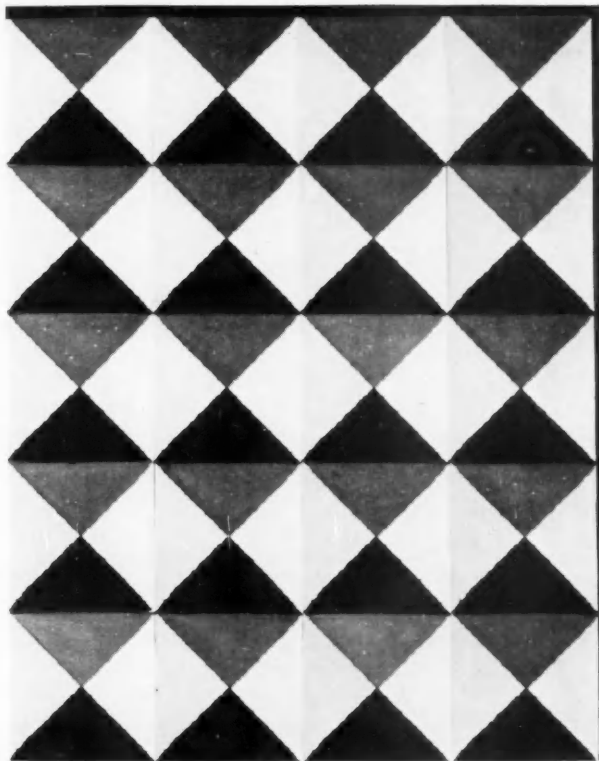


*A radiogram designed by Geoffrey Dunn (with Maurice Russell) for Philco Ltd in 1951.*

# TILES

Following the article on 'Tiles' (DESIGN August pages 19-29) in which Mark Hartland Thomas stressed the important role that pattern-making tiles can play in the modern interior, we have received some more tiles of this sort from the Purbeck Decorative Tile Company, designed by Reginald Till. These we are illustrating in the same manner as before - showing in two examples the unit tile on its own, together with several of its patternways. It is a feature of this kind of tile that the more neutral in design the single tile, the more rich and various is the number of patterns of different scale and texture that can be composed with it.

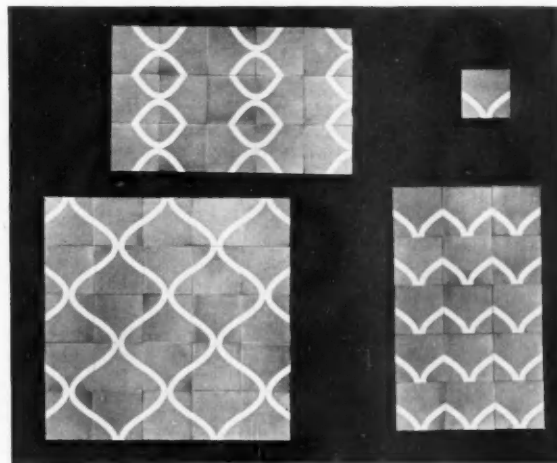
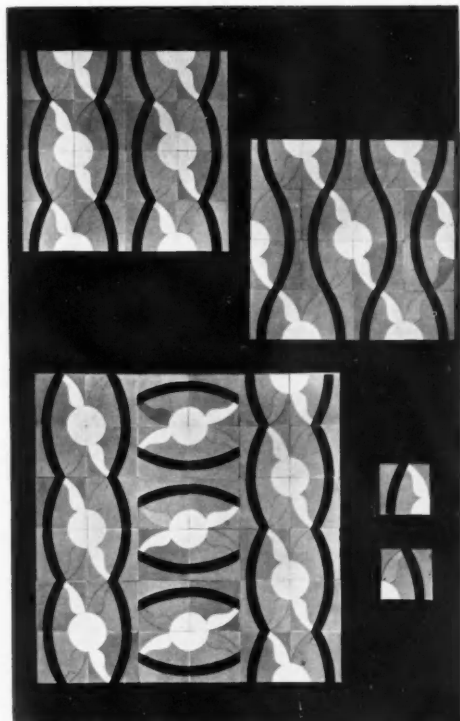
These designs form a welcome addition to those previously shown and we shall be glad to see other examples by manufacturers and designers who have worked in this same field of pattern-making tiles.



ABOVE: 'Pyramids', for the roof garden in the Time & Life building, London.

LEFT: A special design for the Honeylands Primary School at Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield.

BELOW: 'Arc', the single tile and three of the patterns that can be constructed with it.



# REVIEW of CURRENT DESIGN

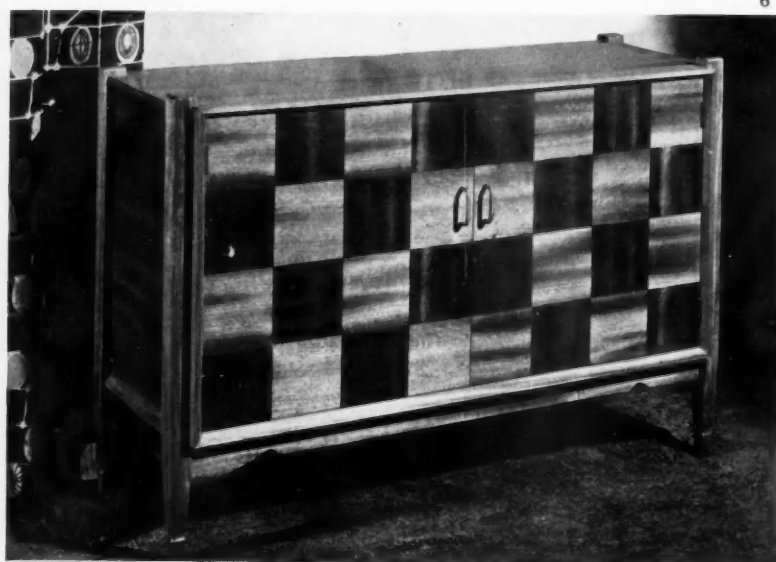
This feature offers a selection of goods up to the standard acceptable for DESIGN REVIEW, the photographic index of current British products that is open for inspection at the London headquarters of the CoID. Manufacturers in a wide range of durable consumer goods are invited to submit their new products for inclusion in DESIGN REVIEW. Enquiries should be addressed to Mark Hartland Thomas, Chief Industrial Officer, Council of Industrial Design.

1, 2 and 3: Three examples of moderately priced wallpapers. The small, closely repeated motifs add colour and texture to a wall without being too obtrusive. Different colouring available. Makers: 1 and 2, Arthur Sanderson & Son Ltd. 3, a CROWN paper by Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd.

4: 'Persian figures' hand printed linen fabric. Spidery drawing in this delicate design represents subjects based on oriental motifs. Extensive range of colours. Designer: I. G. Munro. Maker: Liberty's.

5: 'Panorama' furnishing fabric screen printed on cotton. Free treatment of geometric shapes makes this design most effective when hung or draped. Three colourways. Designer: Sylvia Chalmers. Maker: Elizabeth Eaton (Wholesale) Ltd.

6: Reaction against plain surfaces, a hallmark of the prewar 'modern movement', has found expression in a greatly increased use of surface pattern in today's furniture and interiors. Chequered effect on the front of this sideboard is achieved with an arrangement of mahogany veneers. Handles are of satin brass. Designer: A. J. Milne. Maker: Heal & Son Ltd.



7: This design, 'Dark Garden' is printed on a new ARDIL fabric simulating wool. The finely drawn lines give an all-over texture in spite of the large repeat. Designer: Hilda Durkin. Maker: Liberty's.

8: The problems of shaving in bad light will be eased by this shaving mirror which incorporates a lamp in the base. Light is directed on to the face, and in particular, under the chin. The mirror is flat on one side, concave on the other and is supported by a ball joint. Maker: Coalport Metalware Ltd.

9: Telephone directories can become a muddle in even the most well ordered homes and offices. This stove-enamelled steel rack is small and neat and will make for greater tidiness. Rubber ball feet prevent scratching of desk or table tops. Designer: Simon Muirhead. Maker: Herbert Berry Associates.

10: Restraint is the keynote in the design of this compact folding travel watch with its well laid-out dial and simple star pattern on the case. Finish is in gilt and alternative patterns are available. Weight is only two ounces. Maker: Louis Newmark Ltd.

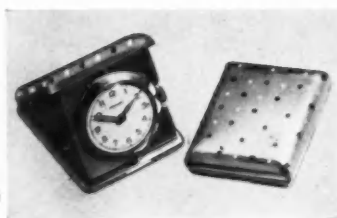
11: Plastic quart measuring jug with calibrations for pints, fluid ounces, litres, cubic centimetres and British Standards cups. Pouring levels indicate how much of contents is left while the jug is tilted. Lid is not permanently hinged and lifts off for cleaning. Designer: W. Bruce Brown. Maker: Halex Ltd.



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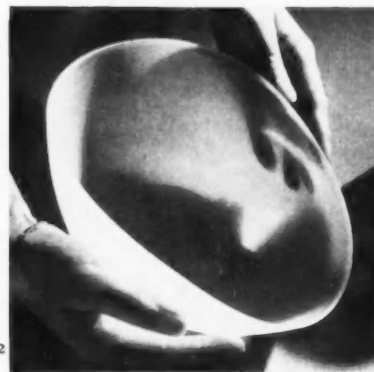
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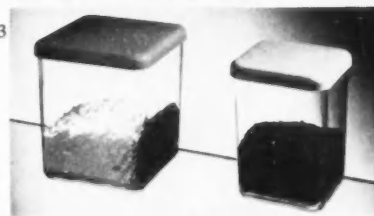
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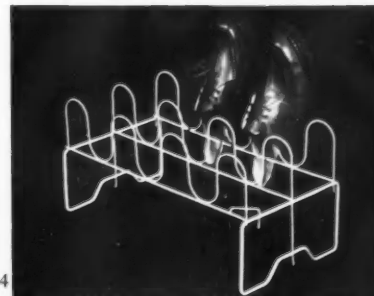
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15

12: Polythene mixing bowl is unbreakable and can be pressed into shape for pouring. Maker: Jarrett, Rainsford & Laughton Ltd.

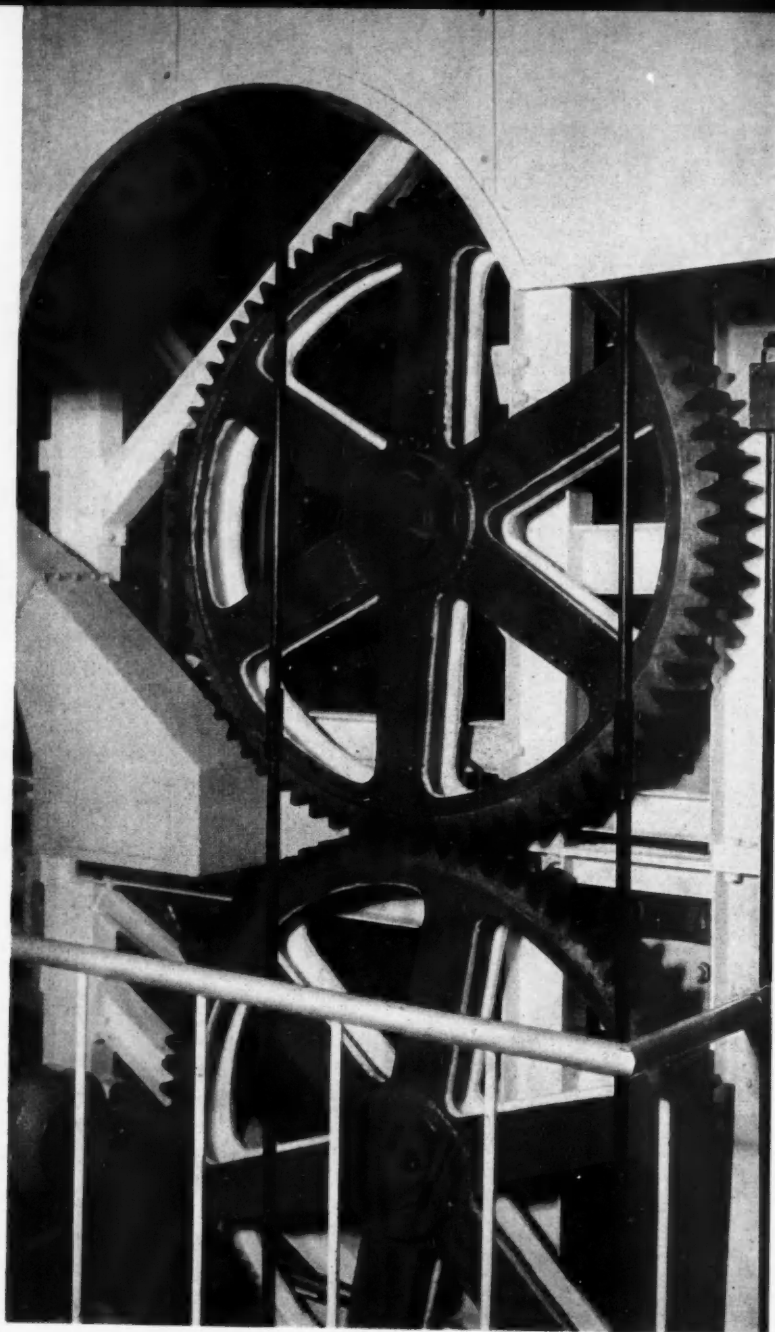
13: Square shape of these polystyrene containers saves space on kitchen shelves. Lids are pale green, red or ivory. Maker: Jarrett, Rainsford & Laughton Ltd.

14: Six pairs of shoes at a time can be stored on this rack which can be folded flat when not in use. Construction is of mild steel finished in green enamel. Maker: Smith Bros (Wirewares) Ltd.

15: Dust pan of polythene will not break and is easy to wash and clean. The pliable nature of the plastic allows the lip to mould itself on to curved or uneven surfaces so that dust is not swept underneath. Designers: Julius and Moritz Mendle. Maker: Mendle Bros Ltd.



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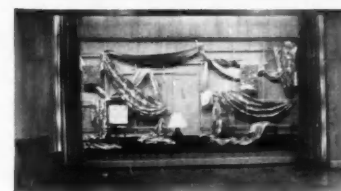
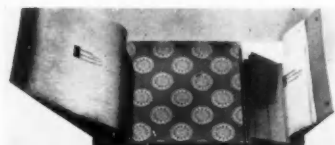


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# Two new showrooms for wallpapers



1



**LONDON** At the existing showrooms of John Line & Son Ltd in Tottenham Court Road a section has been redesigned for the display mostly of the more expensive hand-printed designs. Although the new room is small, maximum display area has been gained by the use of free standing screens, 1, each with three panels, which are placed down the centre of the room. These are spaced to allow free circulation within the exhibition area and are also placed along one wall to form a series of room corners in which groups of traditional and modern furniture are set. A row of hinged display panels is fitted along the opposite wall and these are designed so that a single movement from either end will turn all the panels. The front window extends along the full width of the room and is screened with tropical plants in a long mahogany trough. An interesting feature is the sample book, 2, in which paint samples and matching wallpapers may be directly compared. The showroom, including specially designed desks and chairs, 3, was carried out by the firm.

**MANCHESTER** The ground floor of King's House, the headquarters of the Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd, has recently been converted into an extensive showroom as a major part of a new advisory service. The purpose of this service is to stimulate greater interest in the possibilities of contemporary wallpapers which many people in the north seldom see in the ranges of decorators' pattern books. Technical and aesthetic advice is given both personally and through a programme of exhibitions, lectures and films. The showroom itself, 6, covers an area of over 3,000 square feet and includes a series of room settings, one of which is shown here, 4, a shallow stage for films and demonstrations, 5, a projection room and several offices. The showroom was designed by the firm's staff who were also responsible for the display tables and storage cupboards. The three-dimensional wall plaques displayed on the centre supporting column, 6, however, add a 'pixie' note which is out of character with the rest of the room.

4

5



## NEWS

### RSA bi-centenary

The Royal Society of Arts will be celebrating its bi-centenary on March 22 next year. This was announced at an extraordinary meeting of the Council of the Society held recently at Buckingham Palace, at which His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, President of the Society, was in the Chair. The following resolution was read and adopted by the Society: "Whereas certain Noblemen, Clergy, Gentlemen and Merchants met at Rawthmell's Coffee House, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, on the 22nd day of March, 1754, to form a Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce in Great Britain, as is duly recorded in the Minutes of this first meeting of the said Society.

"Now it is hereby resolved that the bi-centenary of the said Society, now the Royal Society of Arts incorporated by Charter dated 10th June, 1847, be suitably commemorated in the year 1954 and that the celebrations begin on Monday, the 22nd day of March, with Divine Service at the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, to be followed by a Special Meeting of Members of the Society in the Society's House, John Adam Street, Adelphi, at which congratulatory addresses of kindred Societies may be presented."

W. J. Worboys, Chairman of the Council of Industrial Design, will present an address of congratulation on behalf of the CoID.

### RSA Bursaries competition

Travelling bursaries worth £150 each are offered in the 1953 Industrial Art Bursaries Competition organised by the Royal Society of Arts. The competition, which is open to students intending to take up industrial design as a career, is for the design of domestic electrical and gas fittings, solid fuel burning appliances, carpets, dress and furnishing textiles, fabrics for men's wear, plastics, footwear, furniture and wallpapers. The closing date for the competition is October 12. Details and entry forms from the Secretary, Royal Society of Arts, 6 John Adam Street, London WC2.

### 'Round the Table'

A public exhibition entitled 'Round the Table' has been arranged by the CoID to open at the Tea Centre, Lower Regent Street, London, on October 28. The exhibition will show new designs in British pottery, glass, cutlery, electro-plate and kitchen equipment. Three groups of furnished settings showing table-ware and furniture together will form the main part of the display. Each group will consist of three settings: the first devoted to breakfast, the second to luncheon and the third to tea or supper. In addition there will be displays of goods shown by themselves.

The display has been designed by Margaret Casson and all the items to be shown have been selected from DESIGN REVIEW, the photographic index of good contemporary designs held by the CoID.

The exhibition will be open from October 28 - November 20. Weekdays: 10.30 a.m. - 6 p.m. Saturdays: 10.30 - 12.30.

## Finnish Pottery

These examples of artist-designed kitchen-ware and table-ware were produced by the Arabia pottery works in Helsinki and were displayed in an exhibition there earlier this year. The exhibition was organised by Kaj Franck, the designer, who is also a director of the Notsjo Glassworks. The Arabia factory is the only large pottery works in Finland, with products ranging from conventional pieces for popular consumption to

fine and imaginative hand-made earthenware and china. The artist potters, who work in high studios overlooking a landscape of inland waters and wooded islands, are given a completely free hand to experiment with new shapes and decoration, but the 'run of the mill' products are often dull and conventional.

In this exhibition an attempt had been made to introduce a range of moderately priced, well-designed pieces for sale in the more popular markets.



ABOVE: Oval Potato dish. Designer: Kaj Franck.

BELOW: Group of meat and vegetable dishes. Designers: The caserole, Kaarina Aho. Other pieces, Kaj Franck.



### CoID Annual report

The eighth annual report of the Council of Industrial Design for the year ended March 31 1953 has been published and is now on sale price 1s 6d. It can be obtained through booksellers or may be ordered direct from the CoID.

The work of the various departments of the Council during the year is briefly described and some of the chief activities are illustrated in eight pages of photographs. Four of these pages are devoted to products which have been produced as a result of recommendations to manufacturers who requested advice on the choice of designers. This advisory service is given free by the Council's Record of Designers.

### FBI prize winner

The annual prize which is awarded by the Industrial Art Committee of the Federation of British Industries to a student of the Royal College of Art has been won this year by H. F. Davy. Mr Davy is a student of woven textiles and two examples of his



ABOVE: Jam dishes, which can be stacked, finished in various coloured glazes. Designer: Kaj Franck.

work have been illustrated in recent issues of DESIGN (April page 31 and August page 32). The award, which is to the value of £100, will be spent on travel and will include visits to textile factories in Italy, France and Switzerland. Selection for the award is largely based on an estimate of the influence which the designer will have in industry.

### Retail courses

Two residential courses on furniture and soft furnishings for retailers will be held by the CoID during October at Attingham Park, Shrewsbury.

The first course, from October 5 - 9 on soft furnishings will include lectures on the history and design of soft furnishing fabrics, carpet design and manufacture, the retailers responsibility, changing tastes in the home, home furnishings and the use of light in room planning. The speakers will include: R. O. Ackerley, Lighting Consultant; S. L. Bowles, Director, John Bowles & Co Ltd; John Mellor, Chief Stylist, Carpet Trades Ltd; Paul Reilly, Chief Information Officer,

CoID; and Jean Stewart, Retail Officer, CoID.

The second course, from October 12 - 16, on furniture, will include lectures on the history, manufacture and design of furniture, trends in contemporary furniture design, the problems of the furniture industry, the design and manufacture of upholstery, home furnishing and the retailer's responsibility. Among the speakers will be: Edward Pinto, Managing Director of Compactom Ltd; David Pye, furniture designer and tutor at the Royal College of Art; Dennis Young, furniture designer and lecturer at the Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts; Gordon Russell, Director, CoID; Jean Stewart; and Alec Gardner-Medwin, Industrial Officer, CoID.

Films and film strips will be shown and there will be a small exhibition of furniture and fabrics. The inclusive charge for each course is £7 7s 0d and retailers wishing to enrol their staff should apply to Jean Stewart, Retail Officer, CoID.

### Travelling exhibition

The travelling exhibition of room settings, organized by the CoID, which has been touring retail stores in many parts of England, was on show at Churchill House, Derby, during late August and early September, in a special room hired by Hope & Wild (Furnishings) Ltd. The exhibition visited Bainbridge & Co Ltd later in September and opens at the Huddersfield and District Co-operative Society Ltd on October 2. The object of the exhibition is to stimulate greater interest in moderately-priced well designed furnishings through enterprising shop display.

### Hatfield showhouse

The CoID has been invited by the Hatfield Development Corporation to co-operate in the decoration and furnishing of a recently completed showhouse at the New Town. This house is one of 36, designed by architects Lionel Brett and Kenneth Boyd, including five different types ranging in price from £2,500 to £3,500. One of the most interesting features of the house is the main room which is partially divided into living and dining areas by a projecting chimney breast. The long wall in the room is taken up almost entirely with a window. Furnishings on the ground floor were supplied from the stock of William Perring & Co Ltd and on the first floor from E. T. Tingey & Sons Ltd. Joan Patrick was commissioned by the CoID to choose the furnishings and colour schemes.

### Education for living

Part of a sociological survey for Coventry, which is being carried out by Professor Sargent Florence of Birmingham University, deals with the problems of housing and furnishing among the lower income groups. The team which carried out this particular survey interviewed 42 families who have been living in a standard type of steel house designed by architect Frederick Gibberd. The results of the team's investigations of residents' satisfaction with the design of the house, and their suggestions for improvement, are contained in a report which was submitted to the Coventry City Council. One of the most interesting features of the report is Professor Florence's comment on the residents' attitude towards the use of the house and its furnishings. In general it was stereotyped and unimaginative, an approach which was emphasised in a number of essays on the subject written by Coventry school children. This clearly indicated a need for more knowledge about different types of houses and the way they



### Contemporary displays

New showrooms, redesigned shop interiors and displays of all types, are being opened every week in London and elsewhere. The purpose, the scale and the amount of money that is made available vary enormously, but it is an encouraging sign that more and more shops are adopting the modern approach in the belief that this is the most effective way of showing their wares. We illustrate here some recent examples including an importer's showroom and two retail shops.

**1: The London Shoe Company:** Before the shop was redesigned, the interior was in a classical style dating from 1910. Storage space for the shoe boxes was within the shop itself covering the walls from floor to ceiling. A mirrored partition now divides the display and sales areas from the store and though this actually reduces the floor area there is an illusion of greatly increased space. Different materials for the display table tops add richness to the wares. The lighting battens, giving both direct and reflected light, are of particular interest and are assemblies of FORREST MODERN fittings. The architects were Chamberlin, Powell and Bon.

**2: J. Wuidart & Co Ltd, glass importers:** Much space was wasted in the previous showroom and shelves and tables were overcrowded with samples. In the new showroom there is three times more shelf space and the room is divided up with display screens and tables. The illustration shows how these facilitate a fluid movement around the room. The showroom, including the lighting fittings, was designed by the firm's sales manager, R. Stennett-Willson.

**3: Ian Henderson Ltd, furniture designers and retailers:** The old firm of Ian Henderson & Co, specialists in contemporary



interiors before the war, has been restarted with a new showroom in Sloane Street. The purpose of this showroom is primarily to display a new range of furniture produced by Nicholls & Jones Ltd to Ian Henderson's designs, though examples of Danish and other furniture are on sale. The new range has many characteristics of the UNAD furniture designed by Ian Henderson for Story & Co Ltd in 1950. Australian black bean is used with an inlaid cherrywood line and all tops may be obtained with an overhang or flush finish. Upholstered furniture is produced to the firm's designs by Beresford & Hicks Ltd.



can be furnished and adapted to individual requirements. "With this in mind", the report states "we would like to emphasise, as a long-term recommendation, the suggestion that courses on housing and furnishing be introduced into the school curriculum. The long-term results we anticipate are a more imaginative approach to the use of the house, a demand for newer types of furniture, and an attitude to housing which would be a spur to the creative work of the architect, rather than, as at present, a barrier".

### New Offices for the BSI

The British Standards Institution has announced that it has new offices at 2 Park Street, London W1. This will enable the many, previously scattered, departments of the BSI to be concentrated under one roof, and will provide more convenient accommodation for those who attend the 3500 committee meetings which are held each year.

### Carpet display competition

A window display competition for carpets, organised by the CARPET REVIEW, is being held in conjunction with Carpet Fortnight, a national sales promotion campaign which is taking place now until October 10, organised jointly by the British Carpets Promotion Council and the International Wool Secretariat. The competition is open to all retailers who sell carpets whether full-time professional designers are employed or not. In addition to the cash prizes of 50 gns, 25 gns and 10 gns, which are offered in each of two sections, the CARPET REVIEW challenge trophy will be awarded for the best display.

The judges will be Arthur J. Symes, Vice-President of the British Display Association and Editor of DISPLAY; Maurice W. Catesby, Director, Catesbys Ltd; Eric Lucking, Advertising and Display Manager, Liberty's.

Closing date for the receipt of entries is October 23. Entry forms and details from the Editor, CARPET REVIEW, 222 Strand, London WC2.

### New printer for DESIGN

Balding and Mansell Ltd of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, has succeeded Benham & Co Ltd as the printer for DESIGN.

### Designers in this issue

R. O. Ackley (31). Kaarina Aho (31). S. R. Badmin (11). Kenneth Boyd, ARIBA (32). W. Bruce Brown, FRSA, MSIA (29). Lionel Brett, MA, ARIBA (32). Bertram Carter, FRIBA (22). Sylvia Chalmers, DA (28). E. L. Clinch, MSIA (26). Susie Cooper, RDI (23). H. F. Davy (31). A. B. R. Dow (14). Geoffrey Dunn (22-26). Hilda Durkin (29). Kai Franck (31). Frederick Gibberd, FRIBA, MTPI (32). R. Y. Goodden, RDI, AA Dipl, ARIBA, FSIA (26). Ronald Grierson, MSIA (34). Ian Henderson, FRSA, MSIA (32). Felix Holton (8). Howard Keith, MSIA (24). John Mellor, FRSA, MSIA (32). Julius and Moritz Mendle (29). A. J. Milne, MSIA (28). Simon Muirhead (29). I. G. Munro (28). Joan Patrick (32). David Pye, AA Hons Dipl, ARIBA, MSIA (32). Tibor Reich, FRSA, ATI, FSIA (11). Maurice Russell, ARIBA, Dip Arch (26). R. D. Russell, RDI, FSIA (26). Gaby Schreiber, FSIA (8). R. Stennett-Willson (32). Ron Thompson (8). Reginald Till (27). Hans Wegner (11). Dennis Young, ARCA, MSIA (32).

### DESIGN

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## LETTERS

### Helping the designer

SIR: I have read with interest R. M. Kay's letter (DESIGN August page 8) and also your comments on the general subject of educating the designer in the engineering industry to become more 'appearance conscious' of his products.

The engineer designer is primarily concerned with the correct functioning of the apparatus he designs, and when this has been achieved, he has been apt to give only perfunctory attention to the matter of its final appearance. Most engineering firms are now paying closer attention to this and insisting on due consideration of appearance being given at an early stage of the design and not being merely laid on as an afterthought. Since, as Mr Kay points out, applied art is not part of the curriculum of engineering training, it becomes necessary to provide some guidance to the design staffs so that the firm's products shall be of a consistently well designed appearance whilst avoiding erratic and fanciful shapes or undue ostentation.

This company has tackled the problem of education in a somewhat different way from Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Co Ltd. We have an 'Appearance Design' committee under the chairmanship of a director, comprising the managers of various design departments, and it is the function of this committee to encourage and co-ordinate all activities in connection with improvements in appearance of the firm's products. In this connection a course of lectures was organised with the object of giving the design and draughting staffs some instruction on the basic principles of good appearance. It was decided to have a lecturer from outside the company so that he would be entirely unbiased in any criticism of the company's existing designs

and John Barnes, of Allen-Bowden Ltd, was invited to discharge the task. The lectures were well illustrated, showing examples of good and of poor appearance, with comments by the lecturer directing attention to those things to be avoided, and emphasising how the balanced use of shape and form could be applied to give a pleasing result without detriment to function. That these lectures evoked very considerable interest was shown by the discussion which took place after each one.

To stimulate and maintain further interest we circulate copies of DESIGN to members of our technical staff. There is no doubt whatever that if your periodical seriously tackled the subject of basic guidance in matters of appearance the gap between artist and engineer could be bridged and a most lively partnership brought into being to the advantage of all concerned. What is badly needed is an authoritative exposition of fundamentals, and your magazine should be able to provide it, fearlessly and provocatively.

F. R. NEWTON

Secretary

Appearance Design Committee

The British Thomson-Houston

Co Ltd

Rugby

SIR: I hope that R. M. Kay's suggestion of 'practical articles' in DESIGN does not mean a series on 'how to do it' lines. It would mean that DESIGN would have to decide which point of view it is going to support: either that a designer should not be hampered by technical knowledge but should allow his imagination to roam freely, or that he should be technically equipped to exploit industrial processes.

This difference of opinion is fundamental in training and I can visualise a series of articles in which designers in different fields could express an opinion on this problem as it applies to their particular branch of practice. But it would be fatal for the CoID to issue a course of 'six easy lessons'.

ROBERT CANTOR

The Cottage

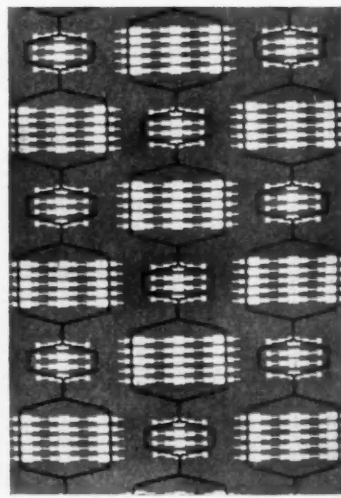
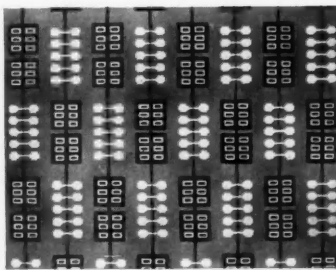
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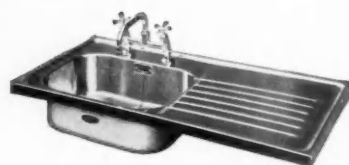
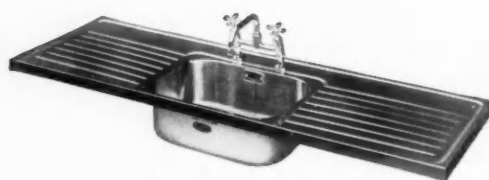
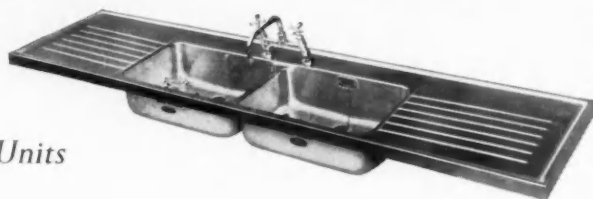
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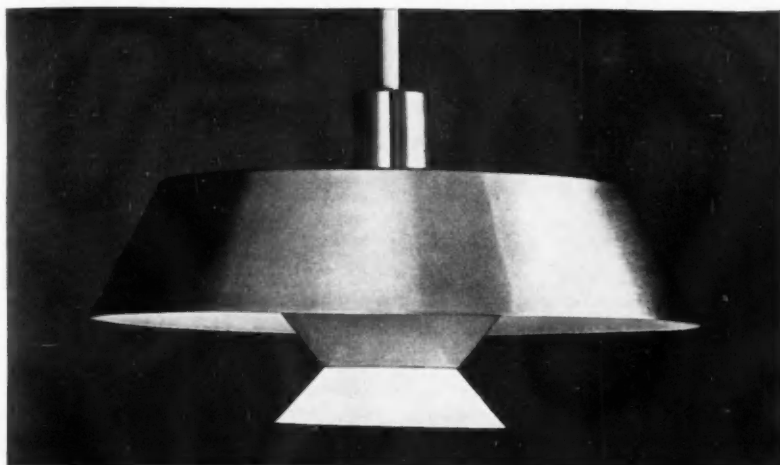
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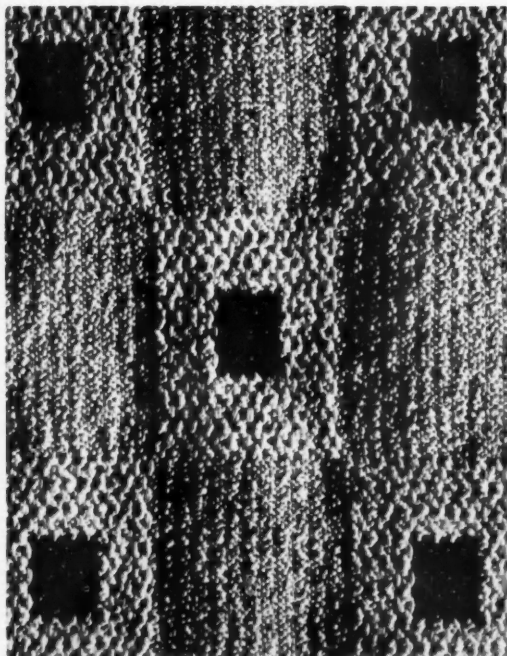
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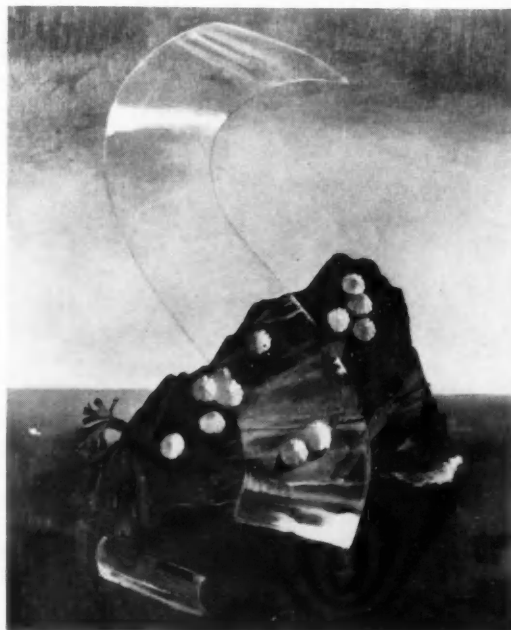
THE CARAVEL PRESS for business miscellanea. Considered suggestions and layouts submitted on request. 85 Bedford Gardens, London W8.

### PROTOTYPES AND MODEL MAKING

RICHARD DENDY AND ASSOCIATES welcome inquiries for experimental, engineering, architectural and ship models; production and development in rubber and plastics; clay modelling, plaster casts, hard and flexible moulds; carving and architectural lettering in wood and stone; commercial lettering and silk screen printing; rubber and plastic prototypes, animated displays, industrial and trick photography; designs and drawings; prototypes and mock-ups; film special effects and models and long-life set dressings; small production runs in rubber, plastics and white metal; amusement slot machines; theatrical properties, masks and costume trimmings; window displays. 199 Harrow Road, Paddington, W2 (CUNNINGHAM 9716).

### MISCELLANEOUS

CHRISTMAS Greeting Cards. New original designs from 4d each; samples post free. Cards also designed to order; estimates on request. The Caravel Press, 85 Bedford Gardens, London W8.



## LIMPET INK

A large printing house had difficulty in producing an ink that would print satisfactorily on cellulose film and other non-absorbent materials used for food wrapping. Believing that the problem could be solved by using a synthetic resin to bind the ink to the printing surface, the firm asked advice from I.C.I. Dyestuffs Division. They required a pale-coloured, quick drying resin that would be completely soluble in alcohol. In addition, it had to be free from objectionable smell and

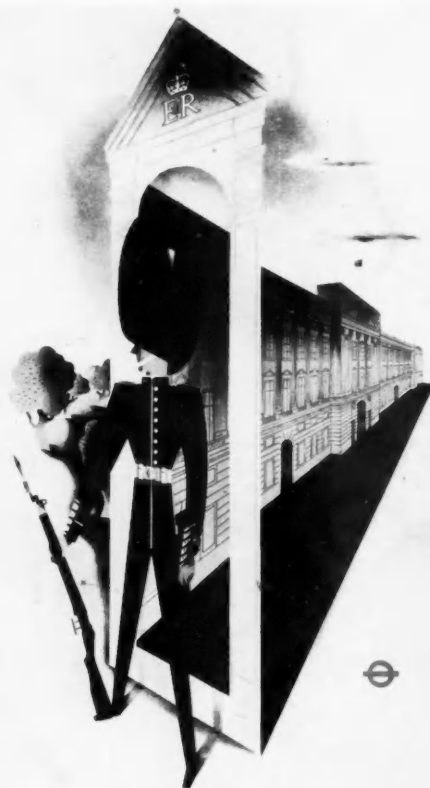
from any tendency to deteriorate in storage. No available synthetic resin had all these properties. Accordingly, the Division put in hand a series of experiments, but the first two samples produced became unstable during storage. This difficulty was not overcome until the research department had made fifty-two different resins, each of which had to undergo storage tests lasting two months. The final sample sent to the ink manufacturer proved completely satisfactory.



# Colour Prints of London Transport Posters



*'Westminster', a Coronation Year poster  
designed by Brian Alderidge*



*'Buckingham Palace', a Coronation Year poster  
designed by J. Bainbridge*

THESE are two of the series of 43 full colour prints of London Transport posters, which includes the work of Edward Bawden, A.R.A., Ivon Hitchens, Clifford and Rosemary Ellis and John Minton, among many others. The average size of the prints is 6" x 5". They can be obtained, price 1s. each (postage 3d.), from the Publicity Officer, London Transport, 55 Broadway, Westminster, S.W.1.



